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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

WHERE AMERICA SHOULD STAND

SIR,—I have read your great article in the August number of THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW, "America First," and I have been so impressed with the logic and force of it that I must write you these few lines of appreciation.

I believe that this is the hour when good men everywhere, in every land, should rally with stout and determined hearts to the defense of the Christian ideals and the civilization that the last twenty centuries have achieved, and it is a magnificent and most inspiring thought that, in the midst of all the clamor and conflicting interests, the world's great heart is beating true to the promptings of humanity and righteousness. True it is that in our land we hear the strident notes and raucous cries of a small portion of our population who have come amongst us, but have been unable as yet to get fully into the spirit of our institutions or to understand the meaning of our flag. But the great heart of America is still beating true, and we should not and will not be deterred by these forces and alien voices from pursuing the even tenor of our way, that shall lead us to maintain in all their strength and dignity the great principles underlying the very fabric of our government, and for which our heroic forbears fought and died.

The world, I believe, has now at last come to understand fully that in this contest now being waged the fundamental issue to be determined is whether "might makes right" and whether or not small states have a right to exist. In such an issue, of course, there never can be any question as to where America will stand.

The regrettable thing about it all, however, is that those representing the American people failed at the very outset to understand the meaning and significance of this contest, and so in the early stages failed of a great opportunity to place their country authoritatively and unequivocally on record in condemnation of Germany in her beginning and conduct of this war, more monstrous and hideous than anything that has shocked humanity since the days when the Huns and Vandals, ages ago, desolated and desecrated the face of civilization by their barbarous invasions.

However, at last it seems that the President has felt the great beating heart of the American people, and now that Bryan, the Jonah of our Ship of State, has been thrown overboard, we may expect to see this great country dealing strongly, but righteously always, with the great world-problems that are now inevitably and irrevocably pressing upon us.

The barbarous savagery to which Germany has resorted in her conduct

of the war shows only her desperation, and shows also, in a most revealing light, the fundamental reasons why, in this contest, civilization and humanity must see that she shall not win.

L. G. ROBERTS.

BOSTON, MASS.

FROM AN UNDAUNTED CHAMPION OF GERMANY

SIR,—To repeat a quotation of your own, you have, I think, most decidedly "come on," in your "America First." It is nearly startling! The editor of *THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW*, usually so urbane, so amusedly superior to all the excitements that generally prevail, almost loses his self-control.

May I, however, referring to a few statements in this article, voice another point of view?

First of all, I am quite convinced that all German-Americans, including Americans of German descent, *do* put "America First." You cannot blame them, however, for resenting what seems to them the unjust discrimination against Germany expressed so forcefully and regardlessly in the American press.

You say, "We are not of those who would evade responsibility or avert criticism by shouting vaguely, 'Stand by the President'; that is a course befitting subjects, not citizens" (page 162). But (page 168) you speak of "the traitorous utterances of hyphenated editors who write as Germans." Does not that seem a bit inconsistent?

You intimate that Germany it was who "tore up 'the scrap of paper.'" The German minister said explicitly that he was referring to England's general attitude toward treaties when he used that expression. Did he not? I am sure that I read that somewhere. Some one separated the words from the context and stated that this was the self-confessed attitude of Germany.

You say that declaring a "war zone" was a "brazen violation of international law." Are we not very technical, suddenly, about our observance of international law? Did not the President advise Americans to leave Mexico when it became dangerous to remain there? Would it have been improper, then, to advise Americans to observe caution about venturing into the danger zone? I know a lady who sailed for England a day after the *Lusitania*. Her husband, an American, living in London, advised her to be certain to book her passage on an American ship. She arrived in England safely. Was that not slight enough caution to observe?

Considering the matter legally, however, was it United States law to ship ammunition with passengers? Or to allow a belligerent thus to sail from our own ports? Are not our contentions based on rather dubious premises?

And again, considering the matter legally and based on your own premises: "It is this explicitly guaranteed right to engage in free intercourse and commerce with other nations that we contend for." Does not the case, resting on these premises, involve our interrupted commerce with Germany, as admitted by yourself upon previous occasions? But what a fine distinction our pro-British editors are making! We do not seem to be filled with the slightest acrimony toward England. We must be very careful not to allow a little thing like that to affect our relations with Eng-